

The Foundations of Success.

AN

ORATION

PRONOUNCED BEFORE THE

PHILOMATHÆAN AND PHRENAKOSMIAN SOCIETIES

OF

PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE,

GETTYSBURG, SEPT. 19, 1843.

BY REV. JOHN TODD, D. D.

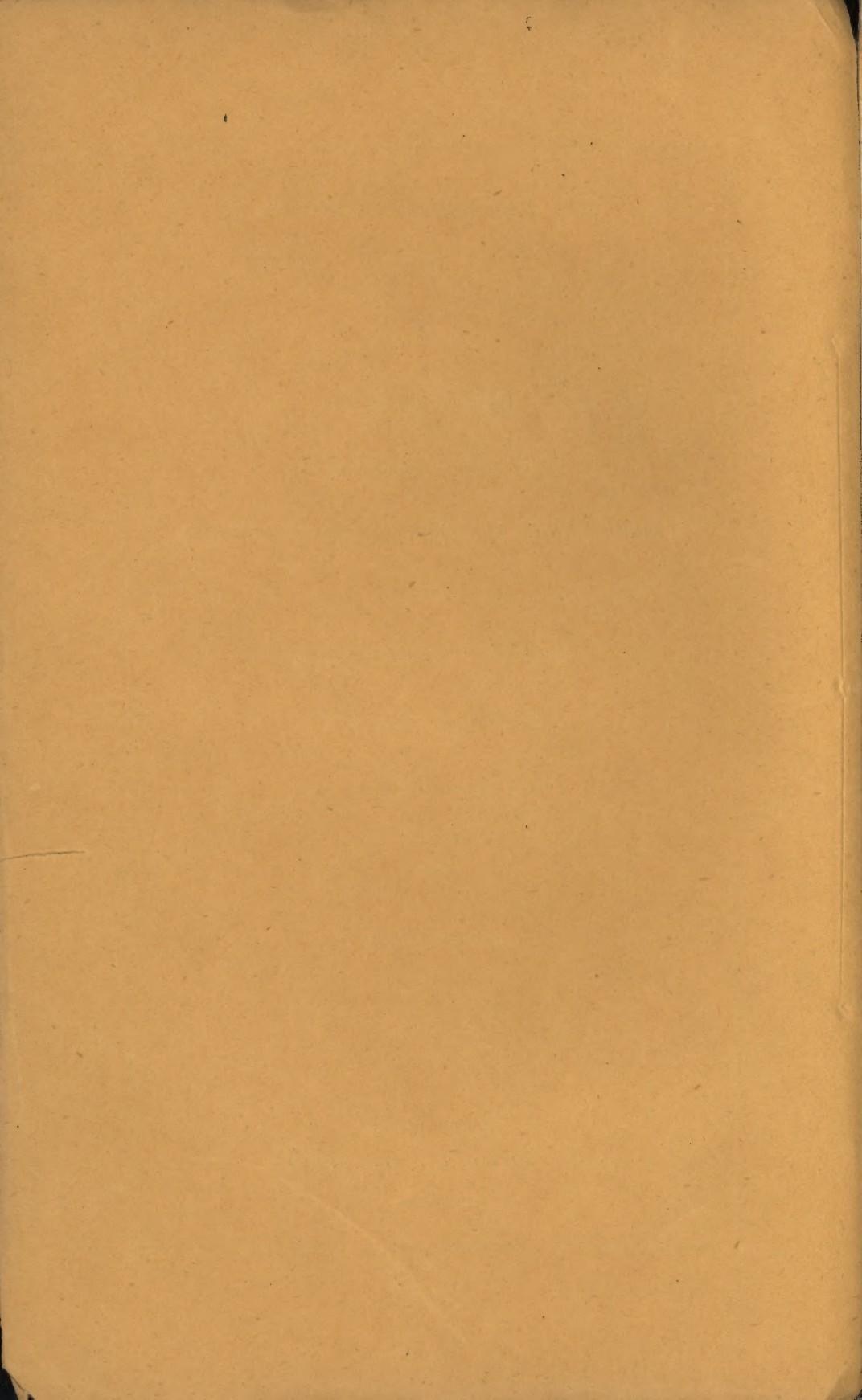
Author of "Student's Manual," "Sabbath School Teacher," "Lectures to Children," &c.

SECOND EDITION.

GETTYSBURG:

PRINTED BY H. C. NEINSTEDT.

MDCCCXLIV.



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At the Union Church

Presented on Oct. 10, 1843. — OF
which we have followed. It would be pleasant for us to allude to some
of the gratifications — **PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE,**
of you a copy for publication. — We have had a few hours of enjoyment which
we have experienced.

GETTYSBURG, SEPT. 19, 1843.

BY REV. JOHN TODD, D. D.

Author of "Student's Manual," "Sabbath School Teacher," "Lectures to Children," &c.

—
A. M. McFARLAND,
BRADY.
—
SECOND EDITION.

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NON PARO

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ORATION.

On occasions like the present, when we meet for the cultivation

of our minds, it is natural to turn our thoughts to the world

Pennsylvania College, Sept. 19th, 1843.

REV. MR. TODD:

Permit us, Sir, to express to you our unfeigned thanks for the Oration to which we have listened. It would be in vain for us to attempt conveying an idea of the gratification we have felt; and we can therefore do nothing more than ask of you a copy for publication, in order that others may share the enjoyment which we have experienced.

With great respect, we have

the honor to be, your's &c.

MICHAEL DIEHL,

W. A. RENSHAW,

H. C. ECKERT,

J. M. McFARLAND,

J. E. GRAEFF,

M. POSEY,

Franklin College July 10th 1813

Dear Mr. Tamm
I have the pleasure to inform you of the arrival of Mr. Wm. H. Moore II. President of our Society, who has been here for some time past, and will remain until the 1st of August. He has been here to attend the meeting of the American Association at Washington, and will return to New York on the 1st of August. He has been here to attend the meeting of the American Association at Washington, and will return to New York on the 1st of August.

With every respect and regard

Very truly yours &c &c

MICHAEL DIBBLE

W. A. BROWN

R. C. MCKEEEN

J. M. MCKEEEN

THOMAS D. L.

CHARLES M.

and others

ORATION.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETIES:

ON occasions like the present, when we meet for the cultivation of the taste and for mental improvement by the aid of the social principle, it is natural for the speaker to be anxious to meet expectations. To do this, he is sometimes tempted to evince the keenness of his perceptions and his power to enlighten and instruct, by finding fault with his age—mourning over the degeneracy of the times, comparing the present race of willow men with the oaken race of other days, and showing the immense superiority of other times. This might be an easy road to popularity, were it not that these fault-finders frequently obtain credit for an extra-bilious temperament, or for the misanthropy of disappointed ambition, or for some quality of the head or heart not more lovely; for fault-finding—however much we may have the good sense to feel that it is deserved—is by no means a pleasant method of being instructed. Briars and thorns may convey instruction very pointedly, but I never understood that even the men of Succoth admired this method of being taught. Or if the speaker wishes to be sure not to strike upon this rock, he is even more tempted to select some almost unknown path, and by it lead his auditors back into a wilderness of learning, to contemplate the skeletons which time has left, while he points out the moss which covers the logs, and the lichen which covers the rocks on each side of the path. And it is sometimes thought the more obscure the path, and the more it is overgrown with underbrush, and the more unknown the relics brought to light, the more useful the discourse. But you can

hardly expect a man who has a great people on his hands to whom he ministers, and who has therefore hardly leisure to rest, to be able to astonish you with learned lore, to condense the facts that are established, and the experience of the generations that have passed away, so as to draw inferences which may become, to you, rules of action. It is possible, indeed, that I might, from the wilderness of the past, present now and then a bone that would puzzle you to classify, or show you the marks of the axe of the hunter, whose name you could not conjecture—or point out to you the foot-steps of a wild beast which you could not name, or now and then present you with a wild flower whose tints you might admire, or perhaps ask you to listen to sounds which come from the depths of the forest, which would make you doubt whether they were the cries of a man or the howlings of a wolf; but after all, I fear I should lose the great end of speaking, which is, or ought to be, to do good to somebody.

Without claiming, then, the learning which embraces all the past, or the wisdom which can reform the present age and guide the following, I propose at this time to take a more modest course, and to throw out some plain, practical hints, by which you may be aided to attain the great end of study, and of life—such hints as I feel would have been useful to me, when, in the morning of life, I once stood where you now stand.

The *thing* which the student desires above all others in this life is *SUCCESS*; by which he means, obtaining an influence among men—or, the power to influence men. And he is tempted to believe this to be a thing more easily attained than it is.

I place myself in the situation of the student. I fix my eye on the honors of the College, and feel that if I can acquire them, especially if I can reach and take among the very first, I have ensured my success in life, and my name is already on the roll of immortality. I fix my eye on the prize and I gain it. I now come out into the world, and in a very short time am shocked at

the stupidity of the world. I find they have never heard of my honors, nor of the brilliant class with which I graduated, nor the name of the College that gave me my laurels, even if they knew that such an institution was in existence. I now set out at the bottom of the hill and find that college reputation cannot be transported, and that I have now to begin anew and form my character. But a new phenomenon now meets me. I listen to "a great sermon," or "a great address," or read "a masterly review," as these are called, and wonder at the small effects produced. I am surprised that the results are not in proportion to the calibre of the gun, or the quantity of the powder burned; and here I find one of those great laws of God which meet me all the way through life: and that is, *that character and influence cannot be acquired by any one effort, however gigantic.* For the same reason that I cannot nourish my body by eating one great meal—nor acquire the character of a scholar by one perfect recitation. It is by a succession of impulses and stimulants that we are to be kept alive and invigorated. Hence it is, that a single effort, however brilliant, seldom does more real good than an ordinary discourse. This is a law of our being, and this is the reason why, if I wish to acquire influence, and have my character impressed on others, it cannot be done by any single effort, though gigantic, but by repeated efforts. It is not so in all cases with matter. You can often split off the rock in proportion to the quantity of powder employed, and you can shake the earth in proportion to the size of your cannon; but in dealing with *mind* and *heart* you must rely upon repeated impressions and efforts. This is the philosophy of the failure of many young men, who are willing to make a few powerful efforts, and then stop discouraged. This law lies at the foundation of all success. He would be sorely disappointed who should suppose that any amount of genius, or any greatness of mind could take the rough block of marble, and by a single stroke of the mallet upon the cold chisel, strike out the beautiful statue; even a Phidias

must strike thousands and thousands of little blows, ere he can bring out the form that almost breathes. It is in consequence of this law that a powerful mind, however envied or desired, is not necessary in order to success. Few things are valuable which are not of slow growth. Especially is this true of character. The gourd of Jonah springs up in a single night, but a single worm cuts it down in another night. In a single season may the willow become something of a tree, while the oak on the hills requires an hundred years in order to become great; but when grown it is the *oak*, and not the willow. Young men may set their mark to become mature early; but they commit a great mistake, inasmuch as they attempt to force the laws which God has established. Even medicines which are the slowest in their operation, are, for the most part, the most valuable. If then you find that your College honors will not carry you far in the strong race which you must run with your generation—if you find that ever your first Fourth-of-July Oration, though received with thunders of applause, does not carry you far, do not feel discouraged. Continue to lift the calf every day, and you will carry the ox by and by. We love to commend the efforts of young men, and they deserve commendation; but you must allow us to expect more and more as you advance in life, just as we commend the young lover who endures a summer shower manfully, while we shall expect that shortly his passion will so increase that he can swim the Hellespont to gaze on the face of his mistress.

It is natural, too, to feel that if we were only laboring in some conspicuous field, occupying some distinguished position, doing some great work, we should not only be willing to labor, but to labor most intensely. But did you ever reflect that it is a matter of joy that God does not need many of these tall cedars? When He has some great work to be done, He calls forth the instrumentality; but the very existence of these remarkable men pre-supposes some great calamity, or some great darkness. Would you

have the church sink into slavery for four and a half centuries, that *you* might be the Moses who shall lead them out--or that she must be hedged in and abased by surrounding nations that *you* might be the David to lead forth the armies to scatter these enemies? Or would you have the world thrown back into darkness, "nature and nature's laws lie hid in night," till "God says, let Newton rise, and all is light"—that *you* might be that Newton? Would you have the glorious reputation of Martin Luther, if you must purchase it at the expense of having a night of a thousand years settle down over all the christian world? If every student who is educated were to become some mighty reformer, some immortal leader of armies, some renowned legislator, how immense must be the evils which fill the earth, and to remove which God must raise up so many wonderful instruments! When such instruments *are* needed, the cottage of the slave on the banks of the Nile, or the coal mines of Germany, can supply them. Wise men go to the palace of kings to find earth's greatest benefactor, but they must go to the manger at Bethlehem, if they find him at all.

I feel that I hold out false views if I lead you to suppose that all, or even many of our youth are to become such great lumine-
ries as to draw all eyes upon them. If the field of action were to be confined to *this* life merely, and if we educated our youth for time only, we should mourn that every one who leaves our Colleges does not become a noted and a powerful instrument of doing good. But this is NOT so. We live in a world so connected with another, that the beggar, who to-day lies at the gates of Luxury, desiring to be fed with the crumbs, with dogs for his companions, may hereafter fly on errands of mercy with an angel's wing, and in the eternal flight of years, may serve God in ways now un-
known, but which will make him a greater blessing than any mortal, who has yet lived, has been to this world. Every one is on a state of probation, and for such there is no middle destiny. The powers of the soul must grow more active, and its emotions

deeper forever. The harp can never lie still. Its notes must be full—the notes of the blessed, or the deeper, piercing notes of sin. It is a thing that will be led to green pastures, and to still waters, or it will be a thing to be driven over those eternal, barren mountains which lift themselves up beyond the limits of time, rising up in everlasting proximity and succession, lashed and goaded to phrenzy by the Spirit of Evil, without rest for the foot—without cooling waters for the lips, and without hope for the heart. It shall be clothed in light so pure, that the sun would be useless, like a taper at noon-day—and forever rising higher and higher in activity, usefulness, and blessedness; or it shall be a spirit, still panting in the race of guilt, flying from conscience and from vengeance as from a pursuing Spirit, like the deer over the mountains, but unlike the deer—not daring to hope it will find the cool lake into which he may plunge, and escape its foe, or at worst, be throttled and killed by the pursuer. It is because we are to act on this broad theatre, embracing two worlds, and all future ages, that we mourn not that all are not to do great things here, nor even that many bright and promising youth are cut down in the very morning of their days. Removed they may be; but lost they cannot be.

Let it be remembered, too, that the chief amount of good which most men do, is to *prevent* evil. Who can say how many young Mahomets have been born into this world, but who have not caused the earth to mourn, because they have been brought under a good influence? To prevent the rise of one such spirit, is equivalent to doing the work of many profound statesmen. From the dark, unenlightened corners of the land, where there is no such influence as a balanced, educated man exerts, come those, who, like the unclean frogs seen in vision, fill the land with their croakings and their slime. From the dark alleys of our great cities, or the suburbs of some mighty metropolis, where the light of truth penetrates not, come those who become robbers and pirates. The

great influence, and the great good accomplished by our educated men is not seen, and felt, and marked. The leaven is not seen in the flour; but it is there—and there it will work and spread till the whole mass, even to every particle, feels its presence and influence. We love to point to the man of brilliant action, and lofty achievement, and bid our young men go and imitate him; but the mightiest triumphs of the intellect and of the heart, consist in the silent, secret influence of a great and a good man upon society. The periodical return of the shooting stars is watched with great interest, but I have yet to learn that all the stars which ever shot so brilliantly athwart the heavens, ever did so much real good, as the clear shining of the sun for a single day.

A second hint which I wish to throw out, is, that in all the journey of life, *it depends entirely on yourself, how much or little you are respected.*

You will recollect that the great Apostle, when writing to a young minister on the Island of Crete, charges him, “let no man despise thee.” Most men would have charged the Cretians not to despise him; but Paul understood human nature; and he well knew that it was not for them to say whether they would or would not despise the youthful preacher. This question was in *his* hands. There are some ministers whom the community must despise. There are others whom they may fear, or even hate, but they cannot despise them. You may try to ridicule certain characters, you may be afraid of them, may stand in fear of them; but they themselves must give you the power, before you can despise them. This great principle is confined to no station or rank in life, to no age, and to no world; for the law holds good through all the universe of God.

We often find men who feel that if they can acquire station, or the reputation of talents, or of wealth, they can never be despised. Let us examine this point a few moments. Look at *Station*. I do not mean that station may not be surrounded by sycophants

who will ever be ready to fawn and flatter even tyranny itself; but in the respect and opinion of our race, station cannot protect itself from scorn, if it deserve it. Go back to the time when the emperor of Rome held the highest station the earth could yield. He has wealth, power, armies, station, and almost a world bowing at his feet; but instead of using all this to bless his mighty empire, and to be a benefactor to the human race, he is one day seen driving a chariot and running races with other charioteers; the next day on the stage with low actors, himself one; then murdering his own mother Agrippina, and then consulting necromancers how he might call back her ghost, in order to ask her pardon, and then setting fire to the city, and in his palace playing on his fiddle while it was burning—and finally charging the crime upon christians, and then giving up his gardens where they might every night light their fires and burn the meek sufferers at the stake.

Go now to one of Nero's dungeons. There is an old man sitting by the grated window, in heavy chains. The jailer has just told him that to-morrow he is to die. He is calm, and the sunshine of the heart enlightens the countenance. He has only a single piece of property. It is a scroll of parchment lying by him. He takes it up and calmly reads a single sentence. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith; I have finished my course. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." And now the morning comes. The mighty theatre containing eighty thousand souls, is already filled. The emperor is there; the officers of the state, the ladies, the fashion of Rome are all there. From his dark dungeon the old man is called out. The altar of Jupiter is there, and he is commanded to throw a little frankincense on that altar, or lose his life. The block and the sword are there, and the hungry, impatient wild-beasts are howling in their cages and dens beneath. He is called to die for his Master. Eighty thousand pairs of eyes are fixed on that old man.

There are no traces of wavering, no color coming and going on his countenance, no courage fed by pride. He is old, and feeble, and weary. But his brow remains serene—his eye has lost none of its firmness—and the parched lips betray no quivering. On his head hang the silver ringlets of age, on his breast, the white, venerable, untrimmed beard. On his brow sits all that is lofty in mind, and all that is meek in feeling. Even Nero is awed for a moment; but paganism has no heart. He has now forgotten all eyes, and that old man is lost in meditation and prayer. But he sees the dark executioner take up the sharp, glittering sword. Without waiting to be dragged, he calmly walks to the block—then kneels in prayer. You can just hear him say “Lord Jesus.” And now he stretches out his head over the block. It hardly touches it ere that noble forehead, that beaming eye and those moving lips are forgotten. The sword falls, the head rolls off, and the blood spouts from the trunk. He died for Jesus Christ, and the spirit went strait up and stood in white before the throne! The emperor went to his palace to feast! Which of these men do you despise? Do you not see that it depends not on the highest or the lowest station, whether a man shall be respected or not—but that it *does* depend on himself?

Talents are equally impotent to protect you, if unaccompanied by moral character. Watch that young man who is young with you. Born of most respectable parentage, his boyhood is spent in unclouded sun-shine. In the morning of life he shews uncommon powers of mind. In his studies, he seems intuitively to grasp all the elements of learning. While others slowly toil up the hill, studying day and night, he reaches the top at a single leap. He comes out of College in advance of all the rest. He acquires his profession, and uniting uncommon beauty of person with great brilliancy of mind, his prospects are fair in proportion. He marries one who would have honored a throne. He is admired, caressed, promoted and placed high in office. His fellows pay a

willing homage to his talents, and will place any trusts in his hands. But now the picture begins to darken. The breathings of the serpent are on it. He is found destitute of all moral principle. He begins to drink, deep, deeper and deeper. He has no companionship with truth, and will lie, when the truth would answer his immediate purpose better. He is known to be unprincipled, licentious, and a drunkard. And yet all acknowledge the great powers of his mind. But he is doomed, and is every where shunned. When the last shred of patience and love is gone, the wife of his youth leaves him. His children blush at the mention of his name. He is found in the gutters of the street—a disgrace to his species. Now why do not his talents save him? Because it is impossible for mankind not to despise him. The brilliant comet hath voluntarily broken away from its orbit, and is rushing away in its madness, and will dash other stars in ruins, unless God keeps them out of its way, and you feel no compunctions when you say, let it go, let it sink down and become a star of darkness, and dwell in the blackness of darkness forever! Arcturus and his sons, Orion and Pleiades, shall be honored so long as they walk in the beautiful path-way which God hath marked out for them; but if of their own accord they shoot off and run a mad career through infinite space, we will say let them go, and we will turn to the lesser star of the North and honor her so long as she holds her place and fulfils her destiny. Talents perverted, cannot secure a man from contempt. Nor can you despise real worth of character, however modest its claims.

It is still more obvious that *Wealth* cannot procure respect, separated from moral character. Two conditions are indispensable if wealth is to command respect. The one is, that it be honestly and honorably obtained; and the other is, that it be used for the benefit of others besides the possessor. If either of these conditions be wanting, the possessor will assuredly be despised. A stream of water that runs under ground for miles, as I have seen

in some of your gorgeous valleys, may be pure and sweet, yet you want no such streams. It may murmur sweetly in its dark recesses, but it drains off the showers as fast as the heavens shed them down, and it leaves all the valley, which would otherwise be a golden valley, dry and without inhabitants. Sycophants may flatter wealth, and want may minister to his vanity, but if he live to himself, to honor himself, to bless himself, the curse will inevitably fall. He will be despised. It is not a matter of choice with men: for, while money will purchase eye-service and short-lived attentions, it cannot purchase respect. Let the man of selfishness, however wealthy, die, and then see how it is! The community will rejoice that now this property will be scattered, and will benefit more than one man. On the contrary, a nation will mourn for such a man as Samuel, though he had no property; but he was a good man—a character which no man can despise. This brings me to the point at which I am aiming: and that is, *that respect depends upon moral character more than upon all other things; and that it is in the power of every one to be respected.*

The most valuable thing in the whole universe is character. And character cannot be obtained by demanding it, nor by purchase, nor by seeking. It must be *earned*. It is a plant which every one may cultivate; but it is of slow growth, and requires care and culture and pains-taking. It must be symmetrical, conscientious and honest, self-commanding and benevolent. If a man tells you that you are a liar, you may knock him down, and very possibly shut his mouth, but have you altered his opinion of you? Can you beat respect into him with blows? You may quarrel with the world because you are not respected and honored enough, but this will do no good. You must *have character*, and then the world cannot help respecting you.

I am the more anxious to impress this point upon you, because, under a free, republican government, there is great danger of feeling that since we are all on a level in natural and civil rights,

that therefore character must all be on a level; and that the man who has never earned a character, has as much right to respect, and influence, and standing, as the man who has a god-like character. But this cannot be: for the simple reason, that God has so made men that they must respect virtue, and despise vice and selfishness, wherever seen. What a wise provision under the government of God, that there is only one being in the universe who can hurt you, and that is—yourself: that a man is really injured only by what he does himself! This is true of any station—from that of the slave to that of the monarch on the throne. Human governments may guarantee to you life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and you may praise those who have bequeathed to you a legacy so rich; but God has bestowed something beyond all this, when he wrote a law, not on paper, nor on parchment, but on the living heart of man, that he shall honor and respect a virtuous character, and he shall despise the opposite. It is with all men as it was with Cain; if they do well, they are accepted; if they sin, the sin lies at their door, and no one will carry it away or bury it. I know we are tempted to feel that it is owing to some obliquity in our fellow-men, if we have less of respect or influence than we demand; when the truth is, however painful, men are not to blame. It is out of the power of men to withhold respect where it is really deserved. What encouragement for the young who are coming forward in life, to study to deserve influence! They need make no demand; if they deserve, the boon will fall to them by an unchanging law of God. Honor and respect will flow towards the man who deserves them. It is not to George Washington the American General, nor to George Washington as President, that the world pays its homage; but it is the *character* which that name embodies, which is to be admired in all ages. It is not our form of government that gave you this glorious principle, but it was given by God when he made the human soul, and he put it out of your power to bestow the same meed of praise on the Priest.

and the Levite who left the wounded man to perish, that you do on the Samaritan who shewed compassion.

You will not understand me to say that under a free government, the man who deserves the best, will receive the highest offices and honors. You cannot expect that party feeling and prejudices will be so overcome by this principle, as to bestow honors where most deserved; nor am I saying that any man will receive all that *he* may think he deserves; but I am saying that in their *hearts* men respect or despise you according to your real character, and that a man is to blame in proportion as he is despised.

And I cannot but remark, that my principle is not fully illustrated unless I add, that it is a universal and eternal principle—not confined to the narrow limits which lie between us and the grave, nor to this little world merely, but it reaches all worlds and all future being. And at the final consummation of all things, when the great drama of time shall be closed, when the wicked shall all stand speechless before the throne, it is not the command of God that clothes them with shame and everlasting contempt; but it is their own character. It would be out of the power of God to make the angels in heaven, and the saints before his judgment-seat, and the devils in hell, respect those who will be clothed in shame and everlasting contempt. The very laws of being must be altered before it could be otherwise. If there were no Almighty arm to bring down the wicked, they would certainly act out this law, and thrust one another down, and pour shame and contempt upon those who deserve it. It is this fearful law acted out, that makes hell what it is. It is not God's estimate of character, nor his wisdom merely, but it is the aggregated opinion of the moral universe, gathered from all worlds, that makes hell what it is. They are clothed with contempt only because all the good and all the bad say they ought to be! On your own character, then, for this life and for the next, depends the decision of the question whether you

shall be despised ; and over your study in letters of light does God write, "Let no man despise thee!" I therefore say to you as Cromwell did to his army, "Fellow-soldiers, trust in Providence, and be sure and keep your powder dry!"

Another great law to which I wish to call your attention is, *that you gather the very thing which you sow.*

This law, when applied to the vegetable world, is recognized at once as unvarying ; but this is the lowest field to which it can be applied. It is universal and unvarying in the mental and moral world. If you know a young man who in his youth is idle and indolent, you expect that he will reap the thing sowed and will be an indolent man. And very seldom are your expectations disappointed. Every time he gives way to indolence, he strengthens his love for it, and his dislike to effort is proportionably increased. He who educates his mind to rebel or even to reluctate at the calls for mental effort, will have that mind gradually become torpid. Hence you will find a dull, stupid mind becoming more and more so all the way through life. On the contrary, a mind that is often girded up with vigor, and called upon to do its best, will become more and more powerful all the time of its action here ; and hence a balanced, disciplined mind is often in its greatest strength at the age of seventy. How often do we see men (though not half so often as we might) who have made powerful mental efforts all their lives, and who, in their age, keep on the wing untired, going up higher and higher into what is intellectual, and seeing wider and wider into the regions where the Infinite Mind loves to expatiate. Even to extreme old age, such retain the eye that never was keener, a flight never more lofty, and their strong powers never more gigantic.

"O mihi tam longæ maneat pars ultima vitæ."

We too frequently see young men who are dissipated, and who sow the seeds of imbecility of mind and of body. We should esteem it almost a miracle if the harvest were not premature old age,

or an early grave, or both. Every prostration of the mind or of the body makes the next deeper; and hence, by the inevitable law of God, the harvest of ruin must succeed to such sowing. What gives any appetite such mighty power over men, when it has for a long time had indulgence? The answer is, he sows appetite, and he reaps appetite. Hence it is, that the man who begins to use any intoxicating stimulant, however mild, must and will have the appetite grow stronger and stronger. Hence too it is, that men who think they are not such slaves to appetite but they can break off from indulgence at any time, find it no easy matter when they attempt it. Do we ever see men who are given to any appetite, who do not every year reap a larger and a larger harvest? This universal law, applicable to bodily, mental, and moral habits, is a chain of amazing strength. Here you may see how the divine agency, if I may tread so near theological ground, comes in. God is said to harden the sinner, and I have no doubt that he does do it; but not by laying the Omnipotent had on the creature, but through this unchanging law. A man sows obstinacy, as did Pharaoh under the government of God, and he reaps obstinacy—the same thing sowed. If I sow tares or thistles in my field, it requires no interposition of God to cause it to produce tares and thistles. The laws already established do that. The Bible never made this great law—it is laid in our very being. It is written on all the creation of God by his own finger. It is thus that men who stifle their consciences, and play with a thing so sacred as truth, are left to reap a conscience that is seared, and to be more ready to embrace falsehood than truth. Men may not intend to harden themselves in error or in sin by sowing obstinacy of heart, but they just as surely reap the same thing sowed, as they do in their fields. It requires no decree of God—no divine agency to do this. It is the action of a natural principle. Suppose you know a rich man who is selfish, who hoards his property, who never causes the widow's heart to leap for joy, nor dries the tears of the

orphan, and who does no good with his property. Now what does this man sow? Why, selfishness, cold selfishness, say you. Let then these riches make to themselves wings and fly away;—let him suddenly come to want—will he not find the world feeling cold and selfish towards him, and will he not reap the same thing which he sowed?

Reverse the picture. You know a man of wealth, who is ever ready to do good, and who lives not to himself. He is suddenly reduced. Is there not now a tide of benevolent feeling and of sympathy setting towards him? And will he not find that the kindness and benevolence which he sowed are precisely the thing which he now reaps? This is a law of great strength. It thrills through heaven and it vibrates through hell. It is thus easy for a man to select and feed one sin, one appetite, one lust, till it becomes the serpent that swallows up all others. Men need not go from sin to sin, but each may have his own darling one—because he may sow any kind of seed, and the harvest shall be like the thing sowed.

And that which makes this law so fearful is, that it holds a man, like the grappling-irons of the war-ship, in all future existence. In this life you see a man create a taste for what intoxicates. God does not interfere and whet the appetite. He lets the man alone, and lets this law take its course. The seed reproduces itself, till the poor creature will cling to his cups when he sees character gone, reputation gone, the body and mind in ruins, and on the heavens reads his doom, “No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God.” God stands aloof and lets him alone. And let this law go on in its results, sin reproducing itself, and what more is necessary to produce hell? What recriminations will there be—repeated and repeated, till Reproach has learned to use her longest dagger! What boiling of passion will there be when Passion shall heat her caldron ten thousand times, and every time prepares the way for a more intense heat! When Murder shall become the

father of ten thousand murders, and each of these the parent of as many more! Thus is every man the husbandman of his own destiny, and the husbandry of the wicked will eternally be going forward. He that soweth to the flesh, shall reap a harvest of unquenchable, ungratified desires. The hunger and the thirst of sin will be unmitigated and eternal. The master lust which is cherished and which is growing here in this life, will then, in one everlasting scream, call for gratification! Suppose that avarice be the demon that haunts you here. He will kindle his fires and call for gain and gain forever, without ever smiling at what he gains. Suppose *lust* be the demon here? The unclean spirit will go with you, and in the sheet of fire will he wrap you forever and ever! Is ambition your ruling spirit here? Alas! he is a sleepless demon, and you must sow and reap disappointment and chagrin forever. Oh! the destiny of man! The master lust here, the master lust in eternity! Sowing and reaping, sowing and reaping sin forever! No matter if the mark of Cain be not on the brow of Murder; no matter if the dark cave witnessed the deed, or the deep caverns of the ocean concealed his victim; no matter if the earth be burned up, and the ocean be gone, and left no witness of the crime; no matter if the Recording Angel do not read over the crime for ages and ages—and if no tablet in the universe shew the record, you may read it on the brow, and in the face, and stamped on the soul of the sinner; and by the harvest eternally growing, shall you know what were his besetting sins on earth! Thus by a simple, a beautiful law, is the destiny of the soul chained to itself, and thus will the sinner become his own punisher. It will be punishment enough if the passions, which have already learned to master us here, are to increase by every indulgence forever.

The wisdom and the justice of this fearful law are seen at once, if you will notice its application to a good man. You have doubtless observed that a man who loves the word of God, loves it more and more; that he who gives of his property cheerfully, is sowing

liberality, and that he reaps a liberal spirit, and gives with more and more enjoyment, while he who sows sparingly reaps a sparing disposition. Thus every christian virtue exercised, bestows growing strength for its repetition. It is this law that echoes through the regions beyond time, let him that is holy—let him that is filthy, be so still! The angels of light, and men, and the spirits of darkness, all come under the same law, and it sets all onward towards the eternal, infinite throne, or downward in the slavery of sin. It is this law that disappoints so many young men. They think they can go so far in indulgence, and then stop, and moral character shall stop and hold itself in obedience to reason and conscience; but they find, too late, that this law has bound them and their darling sins too closely together to be thus separated. Oh! how many have struggled and struggled with hopes and resolutions, till the blossoms of the grave were upon their head, and there was no deliverance! They sow the seeds of estrangement from God, and they reap the same, till they have no power to sow any other seed. This law takes hold of every man, and will eternally be setting him onward in bliss or in woe.

Need I pause here to shew how this law ought to be studied and understood by our young men who profess to have received a liberal education; and who wish to live in the approbation of men and of their Creator also? Need I say how necessary it is for them to watch every habit which pertains to the body, and see that they sow nothing there which they are not willing to have grow like the seed, and which they are not willing to have the world see? Shall I stop to charge them that all mental habits which they form and cherish, good or bad, will strengthen till there is no throwing them off, and no resisting their power? And need I add, that all that pertains to the moral part of our nature is graven there to abide—never to be erased: nay, that what you write upon the soul is to be read more and more distinctly, and the writing is to grow more and more legible, as long as the soul endures? This,

in popular language, is called the power of habit ; but the philosophy of habit lies deep among the invariable and wonderful laws which God has established.

There is one more of the great laws ordained by God, to which I wish to call your attention ; and that is, to have a character which your own conscience, and which the holy family of Heaven will eternally approve, *you must live to do good, and make this your aim.*

I know that many play a conspicuous part on the stage of life, and are applauded and almost deified, while their aims are wholly selfish. But we must not take the judgment of the world on moral subjects as being that which we shall admit when we see in the light of eternity. For example, the world admires what we denominate a patriot—the man who will spend time, and money, and even life, for his country, and that without any inquiry as to his motives. But why is not Paul of Tarsus as much admired as the hero of the Nile? Was his moral character less pure—his views less lofty and far-reaching—his enthusiasm less fervent—his courage less tried—his perseverance less enduring—his labors less constant—the good he effected less permanent? No, none of these, none of these. He planted twice as many churches as the other destroyed ships. He saved the souls of twice as many as the other sent into eternity unprepared, and the banner under which he fought, will wave high on the golden battlements of heaven, long after that of the flag-ship shall have perished under the foot of oblivion and shall have passed away forever!

Why then is not Paul as much admired as the hero? They were both great men : both influenced the destiny of the globe ; but alas! they were great in two very different senses of the word. The one lived and acted, and measured on the scale of time ; the other on the scale of eternal ages. The one lived to exalt man ; the other to exalt God. The one would have sunk a nation at a blow, if in his power, and then claimed the glory ; the other would

have shuddered to see even a poor jailer lose his life, and would willingly be an outcast, a babbler, a madman, in the eyes of men, rather than not do good, and that, on the highest scale, to his fellow-men. I know that the man whose aim and life are to do good, is not as much caressed and admired, as the man who acts merely to gain applause. But I say this is not the time or the place for the decision of this question.

Now what does God teach us, and what are the lessons which he bids us read on every page of his works, his providence, and his word?

On the frail little stem in the garden hangs the opening rose. Go ask it why it hangs there? "I hang here," says the beautiful flower, "to sweeten the air which man breathes, to open my beauties to kindle emotion in his eye, to shew him the hand of his God who penciled each leaf and laid them thus on my bosom. And whether you find me here to greet him every morning or whether you find me on the lone mountain-side, with the bare possibility that he will throw me one passing glance, my end is the same. I live not to myself."

Beside yon highway stands an aged tree, solitary and alone. You see no living thing near it, and you say surely *that* must stand for itself alone. "No," says the tree, "God never made me for a purpose so small. For more than a hundred years I have stood here. In summer I have spread out my arms and sheltered the panting flocks which hastened to my shade. In my bosom I have concealed and protected the brood of young birds as they lay and rocked in their nests; in the storm I have more than once received in my body the lightning's bolt, which had else destroyed the traveller; the acorns which I have matured from year to year, have been carried far and near, and groves of forest oaks can claim me as their parent. I have lived for the eagle which has perched on my top, for the humming bird that has paused and refreshed its giddy wing, ere it danced away again like a blossom of the air—

for the insect that has found a home within the folds of my bark, and when I can stand no longer, I shall fall by the hand of man, and I shall go to strengthen the ship which makes him lord of the ocean, and to his dwelling to warm his hearth and cheer his home. I live not to myself."

On yonder mountain side comes down the silver brook, in the distance resembling the ribbon of silver, running and leaping as it dashes joyously and fearlessly down. Go ask the leaper what it is doing. "I was born," says the brook, "high up the mountain: but there I could do little good; and so I am hurrying down, running where I can, and leaping where I must, but hastening down to create the sweet valley—where the thirsty cattle may drink, where the lark may sing on my margin, where I may drive the mill for the accommodation of man, and then widen into the great river and bear up his steamboats and shipping, and finally plunge into the ocean, to rise again in vapor, and perhaps come back in the cloud to my own native mountain and live my short life over again. Not a drop of water comes down my channel in whose bright face you may not read, "none of us liveth to himself."

Speak now to that solitary star that hangs in the far verge of heaven, and ask the bright sparkler, what it is doing there? Its voice comes down the path of light, and cries, "I am a mighty world. I was stationed here at the creation. I was among the morning stars that sang together, and among the sons of God that shouted for joy at the creation of earth. Aye, I was there,

"When the radiant morn of creation broke,
And the world in the smile of God awoke,
And the empty realms of darkness and death
Were moved through their depths by his mighty breath,
And the orbs of beauty and spheres of flame
From the void abyss by myriads came;
In the joy of youth, as they darted away,
Through the widening wastes of space to play,
Their silver voices in chorus rung,
And this was the song the bright ones sung."

Here, among the morning stars I hold my place, and help to keep other worlds balanced and in their places. I have oceans and mountains, and I support myriads of immortal beings on my bosom, and when I have done all this, I send my bright beams down to earth, and the sailor takes hold of the helm and fixes his eye on me, and finds his home across the ocean. Of all the countless hosts of my sister stars who walk forth in the great space of creation, not one, not one lives or shines for herself!"

And thus has God written upon the flower that sweetens the air, upon the breeze that rocks that flower on its stem, upon the rain-drops which swell the mighty river, upon the dew-drop that refreshes the smallest sprig of moss that rears its head in the desert—upon the ocean that rocks every swimmer in its chambers, upon every penciled shell that sleeps in the caverns of the deep, as well as upon the mighty sun which warms and cheers the millions of creatures that live in his light—upon *all* he has written, none of us liveth to himself.

And if you will read this lesson in characters still more distinct and striking, you will go to the garden of Gethsemane, and hear the Redeemer in prayer, while the angel of God strengthens him: you will read it on the hill of Calvary, where a voice that might be the concentrated voice of the whole universe of God, proclaims that the highest, noblest deed which the Infinite one can do, is to do good to others—to live not to himself! There you learn the great end of creation; and that it was, that God might have a family of dependent, free, intelligent creatures, more in number than man can count, upon whom he may pour out his goodness and his mercies, and be himself eternally blessed, because he will eternally be communicating blessedness to this family. Unlike any other creature on the earth, man is to imitate his God.

Pronaque cum spectent animalia cætera terram—
Os homini sublime dedit, cœlumque tueri
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.

Under this great and wise and glorious law of living to do good to others, the whole holy universe must come, and each must contribute his share to the general stock of happiness. On this principle alone can any one, under the government of God, expect to find happiness or honor. The fulfilment of this law is absolutely essential to the individual, as well as to the general good—and I am, therefore, very anxious that my young friends shall understand it, and heartily fall in with it.

Before each young man, in fair prospect, there are flowery paths, and over his head bright constellations of stars. In the morning of his existence he looks upward, and there he sees a bright star, and then, a little more remote, another, and another, and another still. That one beaming so brightly is the star of Health. It has risen unclouded hitherto, and already culminates in its glory, and promises that he shall walk through life with a step that is vigorous, elastic and buoyant. And yonder, just above the horizon, is the star of Domestic Love, bright as a gem in the firmament, and promising all that love has to promise. Beyond that is the star of Wealth, large and sparkling, and captivating to the eye, and apparently able to throw a bright light in his path. And then the star of Honor, flashing its beams all around, and promising that his path shall never want that star to illuminate it; and yonder, in the western sky, is a mild star that looks like a shock of corn fully ripe for the harvest; and still lower, just in the verge of the distant horizon, is the star of Hope, kindling a mellow ray there, and throwing its beams far into eternity, beyond where the eye can follow.

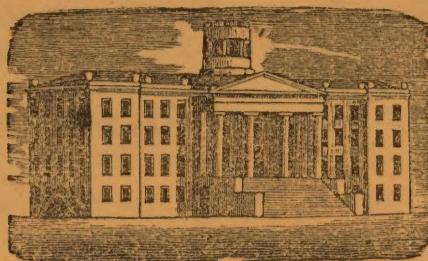
All these can the eye of every young man, as he comes to stand on the threshold of manhood, see at a single glance. If now, you come on the stage of life and act well your part, obeying patiently and fully the great laws which God has imposed, each star will grow brighter and brighter all the way during your course,

till the last one shall melt away beyond the horizon of life, and be lost in the light of eternal day.

But if you rebel against these laws and refuse to fall in with them, every star will begin to grow dim, and that, too, very soon. The star of Health will wax pale and sickly, and hang in its place as if about to fall. The bright star of Love will grow dim, and slowly and unwillingly recede, till the eye can follow it no longer. The star of Wealth will fall at a single plunge, and leave no hope that it will ever rise again. The star of Honor will burn out and expire, leaving nothing but darkness for the eye to rest upon. The shock of corn fully ripe for the harvest will give way to a picture of a new made grave; and the star of Hope, the last that will linger above the horizon, will flicker and then revive, and then flicker again and again, till at last it will slowly sink away out of sight, with its sweet beams quenched in endless night! And then the heavens will not have a star to cheer you. Darkness will draw down her curtains, and everlasting Night will brood over the soul; and God, whose laws have been trampled upon, and whose will has been set at nought, will leave you to your own doings forever. Your own destiny, all that is joyous in hope, and all that is fearful in misery, is in your own hands. The ardor of youth, the hopes of encircling friends, the advantages of education, may all be made to waft you upward in a path that will lead to glory and immortality; or, if perverted, they will become the mill-stone that will sink you forever and ever.



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